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AN
ORATION,

DELIVERED AT SALEM,

ON MONDAY, JULY 5, 1819,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE

ASSOCIATION OF THE ESSEX READING ROOM,

IN CELEBRATION OF

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

BY ANDREW DUNLAP, ESQ.

Party spirit is the madness of many, for the gain of a few.

Second Edition.


Salem.

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SALEM, July 6, 1819.

TO ANDREW DUNLAP, ESQ.

SIR—The Committee of Arrangements in behalf of the Association of the Essex Reading Room, return you thanks for your excellent and appropriate ORATION, delivered in commemoration of American Independence, and respectfully request a copy of the same for the press.

We remain, Sir, yours, &c.

JOHN W. OSGOOD, HENRY PRINCE, jr. JOHN WINN, jr. N. W. NEALL, THOMAS COOPER, CHARLES TREADWELL, M. J. L. BESSELL,	}	Committee
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SALEM, July 6, 1819.

GENTLEMEN,

In acquiescence with your polite request, and in compliance with custom, I submit to your disposal the Oration, which I had the honour to deliver, with the single remark, that a hasty performance, prepared at a short notice, and under the influence of other engagements, has some claim upon public candour.

With sentiments of friendship for yourselves, and the Association you represent, I am, very respectfully,

Your humble servant,

ANDREW DUNLAP.

JOHN W. OSGOOD, HENRY PRINCE, jr. JOHN WINN, jr. N. W. NEALL, THOMAS COOPER, CHARLES TREADWELL, M. J. L. BESSELL,	}	Committee.
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ORATION.

WHERE are the glories of the ancient Republics? They exist but in the recollections of the lovers of freedom. They are to be found only in the records of genius and virtue. The land, once the birth-place of liberty, heroism, philosophy, poetry and eloquence, is now pressed by the foot-step of the slave or the tyrant. Ignorance has erected her altar on the spot, where genius and learning once had their seats, and the city, that gave laws to the world, has been the prey of savage conquests, and at length the fountain of the most degrading superstitions.

Is then liberty, so dear to the heart of man; a sentiment to be cherished only in the breast of the sage, and to form the basis of Utopian systems of government, suited solely to beings of purer elements and nobler mould? Is the felicity past, as the glory of former times, never to return; or is it, like the hope of human perfection, always in prospect, but never to be realized? If we look to the modern Republics of Italy, the seats of intrigue; to the mountains of Helvetia, once happy and free; to Poland, where the brave Kosciusko bled in defence of expiring freedom; to the cumbrous Confederacy of Germany; to Holland, ruined by its avarice, and jealousy of the great men, who would have wielded its destinies, and elevated its character; to France, where taste, science and chivalry were drowned in the blood of patriots; we are compelled to believe, that Liberty has quitted her ancient dominions, and sought, in this new world, a retreat from the political vices and persecutions of the old. Here are her only temples, and here her worshippers. Her last habitations, her chosen abode, her new regions, are more fertile and extensive than her former possessions, and while they reach from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and embrace every variety of soil and climate, they are holden by a bold, intelligent and free people, who possess the same character, interests and feelings, and on this glorious day, in every part of the

great American Republic, unite their hearts in the same joy and exultation.

America, now in the innocence of her youth, and disengaged from the pollution of European connexions, is the pride and the promise of the world. The eyes of all, attached to the cause of freedom, are turned upon this infant people, and anxiously await the success of this last experiment, to learn whether man can be virtuous and happy, while he is free. Nearly half a century has elapsed since we became a nation, and for the success of the experiment, we may cite as proofs, the prosperity which has attended our commerce, the flourishing state of the arts, the astonishing progress of our settlements, the unexampled increase of our population, the harmony of public sentiment, and the unbounded confidence of the people in the wisdom and stability of our political institutions.

In all ages, the attention of men has been deeply interested in the political history, character, and establishments of their country. The mind of the historian, and the fancy of the poet, has been alike employed on this subject. The song of the shepherd has told of the simplicity and innocence of the Patriarchal institutions, where age, experience and wisdom, alone gave pre-eminence; and when, in the natural progress of events, the increasing wants, intercourse and numbers of society, dissolved the league of kindred, and formed associations of dissimilar views and interests, the lyre of the Poet has resounded the triumphs of conquest, or the sorrows of defeat. The Bard of Greece has perpetuated in immortal song the glories of the Grecian name, and the destruction of the splendid Capital of Asia. And the genius of the Poet of the Latins has raised from its ashes the Phoenix of the Western world. Even in the days of "modern degeneracy," when the light of literature was almost extinguished, the arts forgotten amidst the occupations of war, and poetry and eloquence, chilled in the damp of the cloister, or silenced in the tumult of feudal hostilities, the harp of the minstrel has immortalized the valour of the chieftain, and the fidelity of his clan. The great Republics of antiquity resorted to the superstitions of the times, to mark their infancy with incidents of admiration. In Athens, we find the Ægis of Wisdom guarding the hopes of science, and in Rome, the Chariot of

war leading their legions to victory. And to this day, every nation in Europe has its tutelar Saint to watch over its prosperity.

But we build not our hopes on idle superstitious. Upon the rock of reason we have founded our government, and the basis of our expectations of future greatness, is the strength of the character of our country men.

The origin of our nation was a new era in the history of man. He then, for the first time since the days of ancient virtue and liberty, knew his rights, and determined to assert them. And their defence hastened a crisis, which arrested the attention of the world, gave a new tone to public sentiment, and finally reared the mighty Republic of the West. This is the great event, which every citizen rejoices to celebrate. We are proud of our independence, the precious gift of our fathers, and the best inheritance for posterity. Nor was it the operation of a few causes, which produced an effect so astonishing, so cheering in the annals of liberty. The stamp act, though founded upon the odious principle of taxation without representation, could not have kindled the flame, which emblazoned the Atlantic, had there not existed in the breasts of our fathers the spark of freedom. This had for generations created opposition to the inroads of oppression, and when oppression became systematic and universal, inspired the design of independence; for the Pilgrims brought with them to the ark of their refuge, the best principles of liberty inherent in the English Constitution, and left behind them the tyranny, which the civil dissensions, the pride, and the vices of men, had engrafted on the native stock of British liberty. The severance of a mighty Empire, an event grand in its character and consequences, could not have occasioned a general sorrow; for our ancestors considered themselves as exiles from their country, and martyrs to their devotion to civil and religious liberty; in infancy, the objects of contempt; in youth, of oppression. Aversion therefore, on one side, and a determined spirit of resistance, on the other, long secretly operating, at length burst forth into a war, and, on the great day, we commemorate, lost to Britain her colonies, and made those colonies free, sovereign, and independent States.

Boldness and perseverance marked the character of the colonists,

and these qualities must convince us, that, even in the days of dependence, the power of a master would be acknowledged with reluctance, and resolutions would soon be formed, that the charter of their civil and religious liberties, should be founded, not on the license of Kings. but the rights of man ; for America, with her increasing resources and population, her thousand mighty rivers, and her vast extent of fertile territory, could not long have submitted to the dominion of a mere speck on the ocean. Happily for the cause of freedom, happily for the prosperity of the people, the folly of the British King, and the imprudence of his counsellors, disregarding the warning voice of the patriotic statesmen of the mother country, who knew the strength of the colonial character, and the value of their resources, and saw, that with America, "England was a match for the world," accelerated an event, which the operation of natural, moral and political causes, must in time have accomplished. And, while Providence, in whose hands the rash counsels of sovereigns are the means of bestowing happiness on man, filled the heart of the monarch and his ministers with false expectations, it favoured the resistance of a virtuous people to acts of tyranny, and smiled on their efforts to become free,

To recount the deeds of bravery, which distinguished the contest, from its heroic onset at Lexington and Bunker's Hill, where Americans, without allies or a system, led by their gallant PRESCOTT, exhibited their native valour, to its close in the Chesapeake, where the best blood of the country, and of a powerful ally, "flowed together in the same cause," is the duty of the historian ; and to give life to scenes of past glory, is the pencil's task. But, in New England, the tribute of recollection is due to the memory of our WARREN, whose courage and virtues found an early grave, but whose memory will live forever in the hearts of his countrymen. The laurel, which sprung up at the tomb of our PUTNAM, has not yet withered. Our STARK too, fast retreating from life, deserves remembrance ; while his last proud look is cast upon his country, let every eye, beaming with gratitude, return the salutation, assure him that his services are not forgotten, and cheer the veteran on his march to the soldier's home.

The war of the Revolution elicited the first talents of the country, and the public confidence has ever followed the distinguished men of

that period. Many have descended to the tomb. Others survive, and, like the ancient Patriots, retire from the honors and the bustle of life, to the most noble occupation of the private citizen, and their last labours are in the service of their countrymen. They are happy in the consciousness, that posterity will do justice to their characters, and, that the best exposition of their motives, will be found in the history of their lives. Some yet remain in the full enjoyment of the gratitude of their countrymen, and their sun sets in a blaze of glory. The present illustrious Chief Magistrate of the Nation probably owes his elevation, to the devotion of his youth to the noble cause of liberty. And the honours, which have deservedly gathered around the head of the Patriot, who presides over the interests of our Commonwealth, and, with a Roman magnanimity, has consecrated his own life, and that of his sons, to the sacred cause of his country have been the reward of his eminent Revolutionary services.

Of all the Statesmen, who, in the dark hour of the tempest, were found at the helm, and, of all the Heroes, who effected her independence America owes most to her FRANKLIN and her WASHINGTON. The history of Franklin is the history of the improvements, and knowledge of the age. Self-taught, impelled by the heavenly inspirations of genius, Earth could not bound his discoveries, and the world is the measure of his fame. The native powers of his mind, enabled him to maintain the dignity of his character and cause, against the influence and talents, of the British Cabinet and Parliament united; and the interesting spectacle was presented to the world, of a whole nation unsuccessfully arrayed against a single individual. In the diplomatic character of the representative of his nation, to the most august Court of Europe, his reputation obtained for his cause the most signal advantages, raised it to the highest point of greatness, and taught the Philosophers of Europe, that man had not degenerated the other side of the water.

The fame of the American Sage, can be surpassed only by the glory of the American Hero—for the splendour of military exploits, always excels in the estimation of mankind, the reputation of the Philosopher and the Statesman. The renown even of conquerors, who have enslaved their native land, and deluged the world in blood,

will be imperishable, while an admiration of brilliant actions exists in the human breast ; but the character of our Washington rests, not only upon his military exploits, but his private virtues. Though he rose to the highest commands, his ambition was, not to rule, but to serve his country. Alexander conquered, but to gain glory for himself. Caesar added lustre to the Roman name ; but his greatest victory was over Roman liberty. And Napoleon has been at once the pride and the scourge of his nation. But the sword of Washington was never unsheathed, but in defence of the freedom of his country ; and the constant, the last wish of his heart, was for its happiness. What more interesting view can exist, than a citizen, conducting his nation through the storms of a revolution, gaining a rank with the greatest heroes, securing peace and independence to his fellow-citizens, presiding over the formation of a free government, rising "by the unanimous wish to the controul of the public concerns, directing them, in the most difficult and delicate periods of our political history, with the greatest prudence and wisdom, and, when "his course" of public services "was run," retiring to the condition whence he emanated, and dying "in peace," amidst the blessings of his countrymen. A nation's tears have lamented his fall ; a nation's gratitude will embalm his memory. Our land is the resting place of his bones ; but while his fame is the honor, his example is the property of mankind ; and, to the latest generations, he will be esteemed by Americans as the Father of his country, and, by the world, as the brightest model of human perfection.

Revolutionary story has been the theme of the fireside tale, has animated the sinking spirit of age, and kindled, in the youthful mind, a love of country and a love of honour ; but, more recent events have engaged attention, and a fear has been indulged, lest the memory of former days should fade from familiar knowledge. Such apprehensions are visionary ; for it is our pride, to dwell on the virtues and glories of our ancestors to emulate them in our actions, and to transmit to posterity the accumulated and incorruptible inheritance of freedom. As, in the Republic of Sparta, the old men tell of the deeds of their day, the pride of manhood indulges the generous comparison of the past and the present age, and the hearts of the

young, beat with the noble hope of excelling the greatness of all former times.

To render the full tribute of praise to the events, the Patriots, and the character of the Revolution, is not within the limits of our plan or powers. Athens appointed her Pericles to pronounce the oration on the character of her wars, and the glories of her heroes ; and when, at some future period, a Pericles shall arise in our land, then, and not till then, will ample justice be done to the worthies who declared, and achieved, American Independence.

Our civil history is no less honourable to our wisdom, than our military, to our valour. When the States of North America formed the present constitution, they created, what the world never before saw, the social compact. What for ages had engaged the contemplation and wishes of the sages of the ancient world, from the days of Plato, to those of Harrington and Sidney, was attained without a struggle, by this infant people in this newly discovered portion of the universe, a government founded on the people's will, and formed to secure their rights, and promote their happiness. On the basis of rational liberty, has been reared a structure, which surpasses by its strength and solidity, the boasted wisdom of Greece, and by its reservations of power in the people, forbids that boundless ambition, which proved the downfall of the Roman greatness. A system, calculated to cherish every spark of genius, by rendering the avenues to the highest offices, open to men of every condition ; and to secure the strict and faithful discharge of the public trust, by making all who possess authority, accountable to the people for its abuse. The strength of the whole may be employed in the advancement of the national prosperity, and the talents of each individual, engaged in situations most favourable to their display ; for here the race of honor is open, and all, who choose it, enter. The supposed perfection of government, the long sought for union of the energy of monarchical, the deliberative wisdom of aristocratic, and the patriotic virtue of Republican institutions, is happily attained in our political constitution; and, while in the enjoyment of the blessings it secures, let us never cease to recollect with gratitude, the labors of the long list of Patriots, who secured

its adoption. Their names will be immortalized in the civil history of their country, and ages yet to come, will reap the fruits of their wisdom.

The efficiency of a Republican Government to maintain its dignity among foreign nations, the glorious events of the late war sufficiently determine. Our Eagle soon took his flight on the ocean, and soon he returned with the laurel in his mouth ; and a new power arose to the view of mankind, not to give, but to maintain the ocean's laws. Though the infancy of our country, and its limited resources, have not yet furnished opportunities for the display of our naval talents, on the same grand scale, upon which the operations of Europe have been conducted ; though we have not the fleets of Holland, France or England, and cannot yet boast our Van Tromp, De Ruyter, Blake, Rodney, and Nelson ; yet, when the day shall arrive, when the resources of America shall be expanded, and great occasions occur, the same boldness, enterprise and skill, which our brave seamen and their gallant commanders, from our HULL, to our PERRY and MACDONOUGH, have displayed, & which have made the Lakes, the Atlantic, the Pacific, and the Indian oceans, the scenes of our glory will ensure to us victories, as brilliant as those of the greatest naval powers in the world. The early operations in the Mediterranean, under the auspices of the accomplished PRÆBLE, had formed for us a character for gallantry ; and a jealousy of our rising importance had been felt, although not acknowledged, by the nation, which assumed the seas as her dominion, and claimed to be the mistress of the Ocean ; but the astonishing success of our little navy, from the first battle of the Constitution, to the splendid engagements on the Lakes, while it humbled the pride of an enemy heretofore invincible, raised in the estimation of other nations the American naval character, and infused into the people a darling attachment to the value of that character. If we are to have a commerce, the spring of national wealth ; we must have a Navy to protect it : if we are to have a national character ; we must have a gallant navy to support it.

On the land, victory at length crowned our efforts, and, though defeat, at the commencement of the contest, seemed to be our fate ; yet from the experience of defects, the lessons of wisdom were drawn. Our arrangements were perfected, and an illustrious military character was finally obtained. The engagements of Chippewa, Bridgewater and Erie, while they shed lustre upon our MILLER, SCOTT, RIPLEY, and BROWN, taught our enemies, that the "spirit of the fathers had descended upon the sons," and that American courage had not sunk to the tombs of the heroes of the revolution. But it was for the battle of New Orleans to complete the circle of the glories of America, and to fill the world with the splendors of her fame. On that field we find on one side, not regular troops inured to war ; but volunteers of the first respectability, led by the Hannibal of our age, on an expedition, almost equal to the famed voyage of the ancient conqueror down the Indus, and engaging in the defence of a city, which will be rich as Alexandria, and of a territory, as fertile as Egypt. On the other side, are arrayed, the flower of the British armies, the veterans, who had been taught in the school of Wellington ; who triumphed in Spain, and came to gather laurels on the banks of the Mississippi. But there they found their grave ; and the cypress now waves over the ruins of one of the bravest and best appointed armies of Europe, which, in a single night, sunk before the valour of American militia. This victory, the most remarkable which history can record, and which gave a glorious and lasting seal to the peace, which had been concluded, let it ever be remembered, was obtained by the courage and patriotism of the Yeomanry of our country.

From the late war, the truth of the maxim of Washington, containing a sentiment of the greatest political wisdom, has been felt, that in peace we should prepare for war ; for, if we value our independence, we should never neglect the means of its defence. Let us, then, cherish our martial spirit and character ; it will not corrupt our virtue, nor inspire unjust designs of foreign conquest. Our territory will, for ages, be sufficient for our wishes ; for, on the North and the South, we own all that we desire to possess, and on the East and the West, the ocean is our only boundary.

By our local situation, we are able to avoid the intrigues, jealousies and embarrassments incident to European policy, the trial has been made, and the result has been successful. Since the formation of our Constitution, greater civil commotions have taken place in the ancient governments of Europe, than have ever before been presented, in the history of man. In England, their political establishments have been shaken from their foundations, by the force of popular sentiment. In France, where loyalty was a virtue and pride, the whirlwind of revolution has raged, till every thing worthy of admiration, science, humanity and liberty, has been prostrated by its fury. An adventurer, whose fortune has been the most wonderful ; and whose course, while it has been as brilliant, has been as rapid as that of a comet, seizes upon the throne of the ancient Kings of France, and by a career of successes acquires the admiration of the people, and opens to their view scenes of the greatest glory. Victory leads his armies, and conquest waits on his steps. Kingdoms alone are the objects of his labours and ambition. Princes are his captives. The monarch of Spain is his prisoner, and obeys his will. The heir of the house of Braganza is compelled to flee his ancient dominions, and seek a retreat, in his possessions in the new world. Sweden is a military trophy to his General. Italy is his nuptial gift. The House of Austria is forced to receive him as a son, and he becomes allied to the family of the King of the Romans. The capital of Russia surrenders to his arms, and the great barrier to the domination of France, seems about to be overleaped. But the measure of success is full ; the tide of prosperity ebbs ; and the man, who menaced the liberties of the world, becomes a fugitive, by the light of the fires of Moscow, from the country, he thought he had subdued, and his proud armies are left to perish in the deserts of Russia. New efforts are made, and a new army rises, like the Phoenix, more beautiful, from the ruins of the ancient legions. They are destined to carry desolation into other countries, but find themselves unable to defend their own confines, or to preserve the power of their leader, who resigns the proudest human hopes, and exiles himself to a humble retreat. Again the regime of France is restored, and the Bour-

sons are seated on the throne of their ancestors. But another change occurs. Napoleon bursts, like Sampson, from the withes that bound him, invokes the aid of his companions in arms, and, in the short space of twenty days, the power of the Bourbons is annihilated, and the united wisdom of all Europe defeated, by the overwhelming genius of a single individual. Short is his new career; his rapid and military preparations for the support of his power, are destroyed on the field of Waterloo. The prowess of the combined armies is successful, and Wellington becomes the conqueror of the conqueror of the world.* The Cossacks are in Paris; the French Generals are in exile; and their leader is, like an Eagle—chained to a rock.

These are the great changes which have convulsed Europe during the short period of the existence of the American government, which, amidst them all, has escaped their influence, and preserved its independence. Other governments have fallen, but our's has stood firm; for it was founded on the rock of liberty. Without an ally, we declared war; and, though our enemy had overthrown the proudest monument of human strength, and engaged all the powers of the continent in her views, we fought her undismayed, and boldly persevered to an honorable issue to the contest; which, while it left us free from all degrading, and perplexing connections, and cemented by the strongest ties, the friendly relations henceforth to exist between England and the United States, founded, on an eternal basis, the reputation of our nation for wisdom and gallantry.

Of our Literary character, it may be said, though we cannot, like Germany, display our thousands of learned men; though we cannot, like England and France, exhibit a regular order of men, devoted to the service of letters: yet, the literary hopes of our country are cherished with enthusiasm, by our citizens; and it will become a ruling principle of action, with all honourable and independent men, to give power to no man, who is jealous of the influence and interests of literature. In Science, we have, within our view, our great men, whose works the Philosophers of Europe have honored with their applause, and whose association they are proud to court; and in

*“Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre.”

the several Professions, the progress of knowledge has been astonishing. The fame of our Physicians has extended across the Atlantic. In the science of jurisprudence, we fear no comparison; the learning which adorns our Benches of Judges, and the eloquence of our Bar, has never been surpassed in the Courts of Westminster. Our learned Divines, claiming no dominion from secular establishments, but deriving all the power they wish, from the love and confidence of the people, are excelled in the purity of their lives, only by their ardent zeal to push the freedom of enquiry to the utmost limits of human knowledge. They reap the fruits of their labours, in that liberty of conscience, which is permitted on no other spot on the globe, and can exist only under the auspices of a free constitution. The arts we have most successfully cultivated. Our Painters are the admiration of other countries. Our Mechanics rise every day in excellence, and are constantly rendering us rich and independent in the resources of our native genius and industry. These things prove, that moral energy is not wanting in our character, and that the seeds of greatness are sown in our land; and they justify the belief, that as America has rivalled the political and military glory of the ancient Republics, she may one day excel them, in the splendor of her literary character.

We have yet one more cause for exultation. We can look with pride upon our rulers, and justly challenge the world to produce a parallel to the five American Presidents; all great men, and each possessing more knowledge and talents, than all the present crowned heads of Europe, united; and one of whom, while he waits for the chariot of heaven, to convey him to the regions where patriots are blessed, may indulge the proud reflection, that his mantle will descend upon a son, who emulates his father's virtues, and will deserve his father's honours.

Americans have this day the greatest cause to unite their hearts in the sentiment of Patriotism. Their fathers have left them the richest inheritance, the best country and the best government, on earth. May they leave to their aspiring sons, these blessings un-

impaired, and to their fair daughters, the pride and the joy of our land, that proudest empire, an empire over the hearts of freemen.

We have cause to rejoice. We live in the best days of American history. We have overcome the difficulties in the ascent to the Temple of Fame ; and, from the lofty eminence we possess, we behold the Sun of our Glory rising without a cloud—

“That Sun, we pray may never set.”







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